

Dillon Resource Management Plan ID Team Meeting

**March 18, 2002
1 to 4:30 p.m.**

Attendees: Brian Hockett, Mark Sant, Joe Casey, Rick Waldrup, Joan Trent, Renee Johnson, Huey Long, Jeff Daugherty, Steve Armiger, Rob Van Deren, Jim Roscoe, Rich Maggio, Andrea Wiggins, John Simons, Mark Goeden

Bob Gunderson and John Bown were absent from the meeting due to being ill. Wendy Favinger could not attend.

Issues and Planning Criteria

Renee reviewed the agenda and passed out revised planning criteria and issues handouts. These were finalized in coordination with core team input, using scoping comments to adjust them. The handouts are available on the RMP website. The “planning issues” will drive formulation of the plan alternatives. If we find we need to make some additional adjustments or refinements, we can do that.

The full Scoping Summary prepared by Joan and Update #2 are on the RMP website. Update #2 synopsisizes changes to the issues and planning criteria.

Wild and Scenic River Report

Renee handed out the errata sheet for the Wild and Scenic River Report for the team to put with their copies of the report. There were some errors on the maps. Everyone who requested a copy of the report also received an errata sheet.

Renee also handed out copies of the Beaverhead County Notice of Public Hearing that Rob provided. Beaverhead County scheduled the hearing to solicit public input regarding the Wild and Scenic River report so they can respond to the BLM. The BLM will meet with the County (Wally Congdon and Rob) to determine if someone from BLM should be at the meeting and if or how they should participate.

Travel Subgroup Update

Rick Waldrup gave an update on the RAC travel subgroup. The subgroup has met twice and meetings are being facilitated by Gerald Mueller of the Montana Consensus Council. The group agreed they would use areas delineated for last year’s road and trail inventory to focus their discussions. They’ll look at each area and identify travel routes, working with all the GIS information we’ve provided to them. The first area they will look at is the Henneberry Ridge Area.

Rick also mentioned the need for the group to consider if there are any areas in the Field Office that should be considered as an open area (play area). At this time the group didn’t seem to have any of these areas in mind. Once the Statewide OHV EIS decision is signed, all areas in the DFO will be limited designations.

The group also has indicated they believe the Interagency map is complicated for the general public to use, and they would like to come up with a map that is easier to use.

The group wanted to know whether or not the routes in WSAs have to be closed. Rick explained to the group that the routes inside the WSAs are not closed as a matter of policy. If they're closed, they're closed for a different reason.

The Forest Service is not currently involved in our travel planning as they have proposed an area by area schedule over the next 10 years. The BLM will involve them when we're looking at access to Forest Service lands. There is someone on the RAC subgroup from Fish, Wildlife and Parks. There are a total of nine people on the subgroup (three people from each category).

Renee mentioned that both Beaverhead County and Madison County were provided some draft road maps for review and update of county road systems. Rick mentioned the importance of this information so that the RAC subgroup can make informed recommendations.

ACEC Subgroup Update

Mark Goeden gave an update on the RAC ACEC subgroup. The subgroup has met twice, have established their ground rules and how to operate, and their next meeting is March 28. Pat will sit in for Mark Goeden, and Mark Sant, Jim Roscoe, and Rick Waldrup are to be available to provide information if needed. Other upcoming meetings are April 5, April 12, and April 17. The group would like to review all the nominations by the end of the April 17 meeting. They will try to group each nomination by which resource specialist needs to be involved by the end of the next meeting.

Land Health Standards

At the Land Health workshop in Las Vegas, there was a discussion regarding integrating standards in land use plans. The standards apply to land health, and guidelines then apply to program operations. The RMP is the place to establish guidelines for programs that don't have any in place to address the standards.

Renee reviewed some information from the workshop that clarifies the difference between standards, goals, and objectives. This information will be put in the shared directory.

If we want to develop any new standards, we need to do this at the RMP level. However, any new proposed standards must be approved by the Secretary of the Interior after the ROD is signed to be final.

RMP Format Memo

The Washington Office has issued guidance (IB-2002-056) on the consistent Bureauwide format to be used for all RMPs. The IB will be put on the shared directory. The general outline for the Affected Environment and Environmental Consequences sets up the following five categories under which resource values or programs are arranged alphabetically:

- Physical and Biological Resources
- Resource Uses
- Fire Ecology
- Special Designations
- Social and Economic Conditions

There is also a draft memo on the Review Requirements for Land Use Planning Efforts (IM-2002-100). The team was told to note the importance on continued coordination by each of them with the appropriate State Office Program Leads to ensure when review time comes there aren't surprises. Renee is expecting this is occurring.

Timesheet Coding

The workmonths spread for 1610 RMP money is being revised. Some people will get workmonths in 1610 that they didn't have before. All 1610 workmonths this year in Dillon are RMP related. Therefore, always use the 018E project code with subactivity 1610, even if you're not using a program element relevant to the RMP.

Management Situation Analysis Discussions

Each specialist gave a brief overview of what work has been done and what work still needs to be done for the MSA. This was a team opportunity for all to hear some of the base information from each team member and to ask questions or provide suggestions.

Lands and Realty–Jeff Daugherty

Jeff has been working on sections 2 and 4. After those sections are done, he will work on the overview section. Angela Perry will pull together some LR2000 reports for the overview section. If there are no protests for the Axolotl Lakes land exchange (due to close April 4), Jeff will work the rest of April on getting the MSA completed.

Renee gave some information regarding the Sheep Experiment Station ownership. BLM still administers scattered 40 acre tracts along the Idaho border that were not identified in the 1922 Executive Order. We will need to work with the ARS on this to determine how we deal with those tracts.

Air Quality–Steve Armiger

Steve is working on sections 1-7. The capability analysis and critical thresholds are national standards. The only Class 1 air quality area is in the Centennial Valley. The EPA has non attainment areas listed. Any lands not listed are in an attainment area. The whole Field Office is in an attainment area.

Cultural Resources–Mark Sant

Mark finished the sections that were previously identified as due. He coordinated with Mike Ryan at the Forest Service about areas where we can partner up. He also conducted tribal consultation with the Salish-Kootenai and Shoshone-Bannack tribes.

The WO came out with some draft guidance regarding cultural resources. It has not been finalized yet and there are concerns across the Bureau with implementing it. Gary Smith, MSO program lead and Mark have been discussing this and will present information back to the WO on what will be done for the Dillon RMP.

The GIS information is in good shape and the cultural site data is good. The cultural survey database contains two different types of information (class 2 and class 3). Ten percent of the Field Office was surveyed as a class 2. This information will be ready for the Information Fair.

General Wildlife–Jim Roscoe

Jim has a rough draft for the first sections that were assigned. Sections 2 and 4 are intermingled in the MFP and he indicated he would break out the riparian and wildlife

information. Section 6 has a good start. Section 7 has a lot of work left to do. He has been trying to coordinate with FWP but the biologists have other things to do that are priorities. Mark Goeden will be getting in touch with Joel Peterson to try and set up a coordination meeting.

The GIS work is getting closer to being done. The riparian spatial information has been merged with the database, but there are some reaches in the database that are not yet mapped.

Jim also reviewed the MFP ACEC nominations and provided information on wildlife values for nominations where that is an issue.

Fisheries

Mark Goeden has tried to locate some local people interested in helping out with the fishery sections. That didn't work out, so no one is working on the fishery sections. Interviews for a fishery biologist were completed and a selection will be made soon.

Paleontology–Mark Sant

The WO website had quite a bit of information on paleontology that was put into the MSA. They have an updated overview of the paleo resources as well as where the resources were collected and where they're housed. There is a regional paleontologist in South Dakota that Mark will be consulting with. There are no ACEC nominations for locations where paleo resources are. Overall, the paleontology sections are in good shape.

Special Status Species–Wildlife–Jim Roscoe

Jim hasn't done any work on his sections for special status species yet.

Special Status Species–Plants–Brian Hockett

There are 73 special status plant species in the Field Office. Sixteen of these are on a sensitive list, 31 are on a watch list, and 26 are on a drop list. The MSO is initiating a possible review of special status species, including plants. Brian was told by the MSO to include the sensitive and watch species in his RMP discussions, but not the drop species. Some of the species on the drop list may come back into the sensitive or watch list. Several of the watch species may become sensitive and some may be dropped off. One of the species on the sensitive list will be dropped. The Montana Natural Heritage Program came out with a list last year that we will use to compare with our list. A rating of G3 and above would warrant a special area designation. Three plants were listed as threatened and none were listed as endangered.

There are 24 special status plant communities in Montana. Dillon supports 15 of these. Five ACEC nominations are proposed for special status plant species: Upper Big Sheep Creek, Sand Dunes, Taylor Mountain, Bannack, and Johnson Gulch. Three of the nominations fit what used to be called "Resource Natural Areas" and two of the nominations are multi-species (wildlife and plants) ACECs. If they're found to meet the importance and relevance criteria, there may be a package conservation strategy between the plant and wildlife special status species.

The highest concentration of sensitive plants is in the south half of Beaverhead County. We do not have habitat or potential habitat mapped.

Soils–Huey Long

Huey looked at mass movement areas. Just because earth flows have happened in the past, doesn't mean that they will happen again. He did a write-up on prime farmland information. In order to be considered prime farmland, the area needs to be irrigated and have an adequate supply of irrigation. He will have a hydric soils map, flood map, and general soils map for the entire area ready for the Information Fair.

Section 1 - Beaverhead County has done very little soil survey. Madison County has completed and published a soil survey.

Section 2 - Need to make sure that riparian areas are in proper functioning condition. Evaluating soil erosion to determine if it was natural or geologic.

Section 3 - Did a brief write-up for this.

Section 4 - Reviewed information in the MFP—for soils current management focuses on implementing guidelines for livestock grazing management.

Section 5 - Will have a discussion about land capability system. Class 2 is good, class 8 is bad.

Section 6 - Aware of several issues in the scoping process that we need to further respond to.

Section 7 - Will attempt to define thresholds for soil erosion.

Vegetation–Joe Casey

Background–Basis in the MFP for forestry was the Dillon Sustained Yield Unit, which included a lot of ground that we no longer have. Of the 100,000 acres, 54,000 acres had MFP restrictions and 45,000 acres were in relatively non-restricted areas. Twenty-five thousand acres were transferred to Butte's jurisdiction in the mid 1980s.

According to 1977 forestry data:

1% is nonstocked

7% is in seedling/sapling stage

3% is in pole or sawlog stage

52% is in sawlog stage

1% is aspen

Ninety percent of the ground is in an "old" condition. About a million board feet are cut a year. One half of our forested land base is in Wilderness Study Areas. There is about 30,000 acres of forested ground that is not in any sort of special area.

National goals and objectives direct us to do some kind of management on public lands.

The MFP made 15 specific recommendations or decisions. Nine of these are still in effect.

Rangelands–John Simons

John hasn't been able to do very much with the vegetation sections. He has done some GIS work with the range portion. The 1978 vegetation inventory has been digitized, but the attributes have not all been attached yet. The Missouri River Basin project has been digitized.

The range improvements look fair. He has been able to pull the laws and regulations for range, vegetation, and weeds. He has pulled some of the current management practices from the MFP. He's a little bit behind. John will coordinate with Jim on the vegetation sections.

Riparian and Wetlands–Jim Roscoe

This information is interwoven with the wildlife sections, and Jim agreed it needs to be separated. It won't be too difficult to get the rest of the information for the sections. Need to elaborate on what the database tells us and what is available for functional conditions. GIS work is coming along.

Visual Resources–Rick Waldrup

We don't have our old VRM map from the MFP. We have received some additional direction from the BLM regarding integrating VRM information into GIS. Rick will try to get with Lynn Anderson to look over MFP decisions in an attempt to reconstruct the VRM information from the MFP. We also have the Scenic Quality Rating maps.

Water–Steve Armiger

Steve has spent quite a bit of time learning about Montana water law. All water has to be adjudicated. TMDLs will be done on a watershed basis, not in the RMP. According to Montana water laws, Jefferson and Madison counties are over allocated for surface waters. We have no controlled groundwater areas in our planning area. As things have evolved from point source to non point source people are looking at things that are in the water as the source of water quality problems.

For resource demand use there is an exemption that says that you can still drill wells for stock tanks or drinking water supplies. According to MT water laws, if you have a B1 water, it's considered drinking water.

The MFP made some recommendations that aren't being followed, such as having a water monitoring program. Steve has been looking into Source Water Protection Areas for community water supplies–Virginia City officials have a mapped area that they would like to discuss in regard to management actions identified in the RMP.

Grazing–John Simons

John is still working on compiling data for the livestock grazing portion of the MSA. He's also doing corrections in the RIPS database. RIPS doesn't link to ArcView, so data collected would have to be entered into a new database that would link to ArcView.

Recreation–Rick Waldrup

Outfitter use areas have been delineated in GIS. The RAC has an unofficial committee that is discussing recreational commercial use and how it needs to be approached in the RMP. Their intention is to make a recommendation to the RAC that they develop a separate subgroup to see how commercial recreational use should be allocated on BLM lands. There is no current policy for handling this.

Off highway vehicle use–there is a RAC subgroup working on this as well as snowmobile use.

Competitive and special events–our process is fine to deal with those.

Dispersed Uses–tried to describe what those are.

Wilderness—surrounding FS designations and future inventory.

Rick indicated that we now have the GIS coverages from the Forest Service for FS Roadless, FS WSA, and FS Proposed Wilderness.

Social Resources—Joan Trent

Joan has been collecting information for the social resources sections. There's going to be some new guidance coming out. Joan is also working on public issues and management concerns to look at the effects on various groups.

The Forest Service is doing a social assessment for the Beaverhead-Deerlodge NF. They have agreed to let Joan work with them on this. Their final report should be out in September 2002.

Environmental Justice—there's a memo coming out on that may or may not be helpful in providing direction regarding this assessment. Joan believes if a good job is done in the social impacts, that environmental justice issues will get covered.

Fire Ecology—Joe Casey

In 1978-1999 there were 440 fires that burned 50,000 acres in Beaverhead and Madison counties (1% of the area). There has been good fire starting and also good fire suppression in the planning area.

The six MFP recommendations are still valid. We developed a local fire management plan from the MFP that resembles the statewide fire management plan.

The big dollars are in fire. From 1982-2002 we burned 2200 acres (280 acres a year). There are 93,000 acres identified in the Field Office that could be treated either mechanical or via prescribed burning.

Bob Gunderson—Geology and Mining

Bob only prepared brief information on geology of the area because he didn't think that a lot of information was necessary. There is very unique and varied geology in this area. He will be developing maps that show potential mineral areas and maps that show historic mining districts with an estimation of how many pounds or tons has come out of the mining districts. He will write up some information on the geologic demand shown by students from various schools coming to this area. Areas outlined are high potential mineral areas.

Bob will look at getting guidance from the MSO on how to address the cyanide issue. It is currently banned, but that law may be overturned. The team thought most of the focus should be on the mineral potential and not on policies that change with time and politics.

There is very little potential for coal in the planning area.

Bob will talk with John Bown about oil shale.

Bob didn't put together any numbers for trespass, but he tried to explain the trespass situation.

There is also a write-up regarding occupancy.

Abandoned Mines and Hazardous Materials

Mike Browne should be working on these sections. Bob will double check to make sure this is getting done.

Special Designations.

There are no specific write-ups yet for these sections because these evaluations are ongoing. A RAC subgroup is working on evaluating the ACEC nominations. The Wild and Scenic River eligibility report is out for review.

Unauthorized Use

There was a brief discussion about trespass/unauthorized use. Each program should have a brief discussion about policies in dealing with trespass. It's possible we may put this information into a separate section in the RMP for easy reference, rather than having to look under each program.

New Sections

Renee identified sections referenced in the recent WO RMP format bulletin. It makes sense to address these sections in the MSA since the RMP will need to address each topic to comply with the format requirements. The new sections and responsible staff are as follows:

<u>Section</u>	<u>Responsible Staff</u>
Renewable energy (wind farms, biomass)	Jeff
Transportation system	Rick
Utility and communication corridors	Jeff
Fire ecology	Joe

**March 19, 2002
8 to 9:30 a.m.**

The meeting began by completing MSA information from Bob Gunderson.

Information Fair

The team reviewed the purpose of the Information Fair and went over the format. Everyone needs to check with their supervisors about their work schedules during the Information Fair—it will be from 1 to 8 p.m. each day, April 9, 10 and 11. The purpose of the fair is to share the baseline resource information we have to date in map format, not to get involved with a lot of analysis. The GIS computer will be hooked up in the conference room to display information requested. We will have hard copy maps, so that people can look at the various layers.

Renee discussed some of the guidance she gathered on providing information if it is requested at the Info Fair. All requests will be subject to cost recovery—in accordance with the 2002 IM that establishes costs. However, Renee and Laurie have a conference call Thursday with Kathy Jewell regarding Arc IMS (an ESRI product) that gives people capability to view and overlay spatial over the Web. We will try to have information on this so we can direct people to information on the web and save them copy costs.

There were some questions about privacy. We can't withhold information unless there's a statute that the information needs to be withheld. We will provide information to the public in whatever format we have it, but we do not have to create new products/information if we don't have it the way they want it.

The team then identified several "overlay" maps that will be prepared for areas/conflicts the public might generally be interested in. These included the following:

- Overlay WSAs with potential lynx habitat and pure westslope cutthroat trout.
- Overlay wildlife coverages with road layers and ownership layers. Use the SO GIS layer for roads, road inventory done in 2001, and all wildlife coverages pertinent to travel management (elk calving areas, elk winter range, sage grouse winter areas, sage grouse leks, bighorn year long, and mule deer winter).
- Overlay the fire management plan with potential lynx habitat.
- Overlay the forest structure with the fire management plan and potential lynx habitat.
- Display the travel management restrictions by dates (March 1, July 1, and the start of hunting season were suggested dates).
- Overlay riparian functional condition with grazing allotments.
- Overlay westslope cutthroat trout with grazing allotments.
- Overlay westslope cutthroat trout with riparian functional condition and grazing allotments.

Renee and Laurie then met with the specialists individually to go over what baseline information they would like to have displayed at the Information Fair.

The next meeting date was not set. The deadline for MSA packages is still April 30.